

years ago," wrote Mr. Ritchie in a 1979 column in the Democrat. "No other industry could stay in business under these circumstances, and farmers cannot be expected to, either."

In later years, Mr. Ritchie became a driving force behind Fauquier County's purchase of development rights program.

However, it was a different crisis, far from Fauquier, that put Mr. Ritchie on a new path that would make a lasting difference for hundreds of people.

In the wake of the disaster in South Carolina caused by Hurricane Hugo in 1989, Mr. Ritchie and several of his friends founded People Helping People of Fauquier County, Inc., a nonprofit corporation for the sole purpose of helping people struggling against natural disasters, illness or sudden financial hardship.

EDUCATION ADVOCATE

In the early 1990s—after a school bond referendum held to provide funding for a second high school failed—Mr. Ritchie became active in yet another arena.

Determined to see a second high school in southern Fauquier, Mr. Ritchie persistently lobbied the School Board and pushed for the needed school bond referendum. When Liberty High School at Bealeton opened in 1994—without the funding for a football stadium—he was at the forefront of the campaign, soliciting donations and selling raffle tickets to raise the money to get the stadium built.

After Mr. Ritchie and his friends on the Principal's Advisory Committee at Liberty raised \$100,000 for the stadium lights, the Board of Supervisors, then under the late Dave Mangum (Lee District), came up with the remaining \$250,000 to build it.

Due to Mr. Ritchie's efforts and his growing, positive influence in Fauquier County, he was recognized as the Fauquier Times-Democrat's Citizen of the Year for 1994.

His influence continued throughout his final years, and he often spoke out on issues that were important to him. A frequent contributor to the Democrat's opinion pages, Mr. Ritchie's last letter was published here on Jan. 25, 2006.

In it, he urged the Board of Supervisors to consider giving tax money to parents who wished to opt-out of the public schools and send their children to private or Christian schools.

"The movement would be so great that I doubt that we would have to build any more new public schools," he said. "The good news is that everyone wins."

Mr. Ritchie was a longtime, active member of Mount Carmel Baptist Church near Morrisville, where he served on the Building and Grounds Committee, as well as videographer for worship services.

According to his family, one of the highlights of Boots' life was being chosen to carry the Olympic Torch.

Mr. Ritchie is survived by his wife, Gail R. Ritchie; his sons, and Glenn C. Ritchie, all of Bealeton; and his daughters, Jennifer R. Krick of Bealeton and Helen R. Ritchie of Strasburg.

Also surviving are his step-sons, Edward C. Lynskey of Annandale and William E. Lynskey of Midland; and his stepdaughters, Linda L. Ashby and Karen L. Hughes, both of Bealeton; and his sisters, Hazel R. Bell of Drayton, Md., Jennalee R. McNally, Marie R. Lee and Peggy R. Dahany, all of Fredericksburg; 11 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Wilbur Early Ritchie and Ethel Barker Ritchie; a son, Jeff A. Ritchie; and his brothers, C. Hunter Ritchie, Claude Ritchie, and Charles Dwight Ritchie.

Funeral services and interment will be private. A public memorial service will be held on Saturday, March 4 at 2 p.m. at the Liberty High School auditorium.

Memorial contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society, Relay for Life, P.O. Box 1095, Warrenton VA 20188; People Helping People, PO Box 3108, Warrenton VA 20188; or to Mount Carmel Baptist Church, 12714 Elk Run Road, Midland VA 22728.

THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN FOREST INSECT RESPONSE ENHANCEMENT AND SUPPORT ACT (ROCKY MOUNTAIN FIRES ACT)

HON. JOHN T. SALAZAR

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 2, 2006

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure after working with my friend and colleague, Representative MARK UDALL, that today we will introduce legislation to assist and help protect Rocky Mountain communities. Over the past couple of years, our state has experienced horrific wildfires caused by the ongoing insect epidemic in our forests. It is time to action in order to reduce the risks and protect both life and property.

The Rocky Mountain Forest Insects Response Enhancement and Support Act, or Rocky Mountain FIRES Act, will provide the Forest Service, Interior Department and local communities with a better ability to respond to this serious and growing problem of beetle infestation.

While the various species of bark beetle are native to our forests, these insects create poor forest health conditions and are destroying our forests. A healthy tree can normally defend itself through the production of sap that creates a retardant against the insect, but current drought conditions and density of forests have impacted the production of these natural defenses and the overall health of the forests.

In my district, I am concerned that deteriorating forest health places many mountain communities at greater risk of fire. Our legislation will allow these communities to treat increased fuel risks caused by unhealthy trees and dense forest stands. In fact, we took great care to address the concerns of local communities and have crafted a bill that incorporated the input of diverse constituencies across Colorado.

Finally, I would like to stress that our goal is to provide helpful tools in the treatment of forests areas while still having the proper sideboards in place to protect the environment. We understand the insects play a role in the forest ecosystem and the goal is not eliminate them, but to allow communities and the forest service to respond quicker to catastrophically impacted areas.

This is good legislation that is needed to help protect and preserve Colorado's mountain communities. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important piece of legislation.

CONGRATULATIONS TO CHRISTOPHER HOUSE OF CHICAGO

HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 2, 2006

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a resolution congratulating Christopher House of Chicago on the occasion of its centennial celebration.

I believe Christopher House is a successful and absolutely essential organization for the livelihood and well being of the great city of Chicago. Let me explain why.

In 1906, the First Presbyterian Church of Evanston founded Christopher House as a settlement house on Chicago's North Side. Over the course of a century, it has grown in response to the needs of new immigrants and others in our community.

Today, Christopher House is a seven-site resource center that helps families overcome the consequences of poverty, enabling them to thrive. Through early childhood and youth development, parent enrichment, literacy, counseling, pregnant and parenting teen support, and the meeting of basic human needs, Christopher House is a catalyst in a family's journey towards stability, resiliency and self-sufficiency.

Christopher House is a premier human service organization that provides assistance to all in need without regard to race, creed, religion or national origin.

Shortly before his death, Cesar Chavez said, "You are never strong enough that you don't need help." I think he was speaking to all of us.

Obviously, we are all touched by the 100 years of work of Christopher House. We see the lives Christopher House changes—the children who receive Head Start, the people who benefit from English as a Second Language classes, the families who are enlightened by literacy classes—and we are pleased that we can help in some small way.

So we volunteer. Or we write a check. Or we attend a fundraiser or a rally or make a donation. Or support legislation and federal funding. All of which are critically important, and we extend our gratitude to all of those who have given time, money and resources to help Christopher House.

But here is an important part of what I believe Cesar Chavez meant when he said, "You are never strong enough that you don't need help."

Christopher House does more than serve 3,500 children and their families in need. It does more than help teen moms who have nowhere else to turn. It does more than help children who would have few options for summer camps and tutoring programs. It does more than help kids by providing comprehensive early childhood education to families across our neediest neighborhoods.

Christopher House helps us. Christopher House helps all of us—whether we are a CEO or a partner in a law firm or a member of Congress. Because of the work that the organization's staff does every day, the lives of all of us are enriched and improved—not just the families who receive direct service.

Because Cesar Chavez was right—none of us are ever strong enough that we don't need help.